

**LAKE CITY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June, 23, 2022) — In its 37th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Elliott Kortus** of **Lake City High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Kortus is the first Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake City High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Kortus as Idaho's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Kortus joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook High School, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel High School, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy School of Young Women, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02 & 2002-03, East Brunswick High School, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West High School, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire High School, Mass.) and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista High School, Colo.).

The 5-foot-4 junior forward led the Timberwolves to a 17-2 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Kortus scored 27 goals and passed for 22 assists, including the lone goal in both the state semifinals and state final. A First Team All-State selection, and the co-MVP of the Inland Empire League, Kortus moved to Coeur d'Alene from Washington State just before the fall season commenced. She led Seattle Academy to the 2019 Class 1A state title as a freshman.

Kortus has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and as a youth soccer coach. "Elliott is a great player," said Andy Vredenberg, head coach of Coeur d'Alene High School. "She is fast and physical with sound technical skills. She knows the game very well. She knows when and how to make dynamic runs and find dangerous scoring spaces."

Kortus maintained a weighted 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play soccer on scholarship at Washington State University beginning in the fall of 2023.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Kortus joins recent Gatorade Idaho Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kelsey Oyler (2020-21 & 2019-20, Rocky Mountain High School), Lauren Elwer (2018-19, Bishop Kelly High School), and Makayla Christensen (2017-18, Centennial High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Kortus has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Kortus is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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